

I Claim:

1. An apparatus for increasing driver visibility,
comprising at least one mirror surface in substantially vertical
5 orientation and extending substantially horizontally from the
rear end of a vehicle.

2. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according
to claim 1, further comprising two adjacent mirror surfaces
10 forming an angle ranging between 0 degrees and 120 degrees, and a
means of connecting said mirrors.

3. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according
to claim 2, wherein said mirror surfaces form an angle of about
15 90 degrees.

4. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according
to claim 2, wherein said mirror surfaces are concave.

20 5. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according
to claim 1 further comprising a means of rotatably altering the
positions of said at least one mirror surface.

6. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according
25 to claim 2, wherein said means of connecting said mirror surfaces
comprises a hinge, and further comprising a means of rotatably

altering the positions of said mirror surfaces.

7. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according to claim 6, wherein said mirror surfaces rotatably fold into a substantially planar position for deployment.

8. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility according to claim 1, further comprising a housing for storage of said mirror surface, and a telescoping means for extending said mirror surfaces from said housing.

9. The apparatus for increasing driver visibility as in Claim 1, wherein said apparatus is mounted to a rear license plate of the vehicle.

10. A visual aid helping a driver to safely back into a traffic lane from a parking place, said visual aid providing visual images from a vantage point just beyond the rear periphery of a motor vehicle, wherein the visual information shows vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic in close proximity to rear of the motor vehicle and obliquely to left and right sides thereof, said visual images being presented within the view of the driver, said visual aid comprising:

a mirror assembly attached to the motor vehicle, said mirror assembly including a power source within a compact housing containing a lifting mechanism alternately deploying and storing

a mirror upon an activator within the passenger compartment of the vehicle.

11. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said mirror has a
5 pair of concave reflecting surfaces placed at an angles to each other, said mirror being attached to an end of a telescoping rod deploying said mirror outward.

12. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said activator is
10 a radio transmitter.

13. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said activator is connected by a communications cable joining said mirror to the passenger compartment of the motor vehicle.
15

14. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said visual aid is attached to a rear license plate holder of the motor vehicle.

15. The visual aid as in Claim 14 wherein said telescoping
20 mirror is deployed vertically and a single mirror surface is used, said mirror assembly being rotatable to orient said mirror to view first one direction and then the other direction along a traffic lane.

25 16. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said mirror is a two surface mirror attached at an end of an extending arm

attached in a fixed fashion to the car top carrier.

17. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said mirror assembly is deployable from within a rear roof structure, said mirror being hinged so that both surfaces can be stored flat, said mirror being deployed out of the roof on a telescoping rod and hinged down on a short arm to deploy in clear view of a rear window of the motor vehicle.

18. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said mirror assembly straddles the glass on the rear window of the motor vehicle said folded two-surface deployable mirror, said mirror being extended rearward.

19. The visual aid as in Claim 10 wherein said mirror is a two-camera closed circuit video system with a flat panel display screen configured as a split screen, said display deployed down from the ceiling of the motor vehicle at the rear window when needed and folding flat with the ceiling when not in use.

20. A method for safely backing a vehicle into a traffic lane comprising the steps of:

providing a visual display within the viewscape of the driver while peering directly through the rear window or while facing forward;

viewing the rear view mirror wherein said display presents

images of said traffic lane in both directions derived from a vantage point just beyond the rear periphery of said vehicle to alert said driver to any approaching traffic which may present a hazard.